

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 OES-06 ACDA-10 AGRE-00 AID-05
CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 CIEP-02 COME-00 DLOS-06
DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-04 ERDA-07 FMC-02 TRSE-00
H-02 INR-07 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
NSF-02 OMB-01 PA-02 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15
SAL-01 FEA-01 /154 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/MEX:T.R.MARTIN:MRG

APPROVED BY ARA/MEX:J.T.DREYFUSS

OES/ENP/EN:H.SPIELMAN

EUR/WE:E.J.BEIGEL (SUBS)

-----172219 083831 /72-70

P 172034Z FEB 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 036631

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SENV, US, MX, FR

SUBJECT: RIO GRANDE WATER DIVISIONS

REF: PARIS 4406

1. IN 1944 USG AND GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO CONCLUDED BASIC
TREATY (TS 994, 59 STAT 1219) TO FIX RIGHTS OF TWO
COUNTRIES TO WATERS OF RIO GRANDE AND COLORADO RIVER, AND
OBTAIN MOST COMPLETE AND SATISFACTORY UTILIZATION THEREOF.
TWO GOVERNMENTS ENTRUSTED IMPLEMENTATION TO INTERNATIONAL
BODY CALLED INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION,
UNITED STATES AND MEXICO (IBWC), CONSISTING OF TWO
COMMISSIONERS, EACH HEADING A NATIONAL SECTION. TREATY
PROVIDED FOR JOINT CONSTRUCTION OF SPECIFIC DAMS AND
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OTHER WORKS, AND FOR PREFERENTIAL ATTENTION TO BORDER
SANITATION PROBLEMS.

2. PRVIOUS TREATY OF 1906 PROVIDED FOR CONDITIONAL
DELIVERY TO MEXICO OF 60,000 ACRE-FEET ANNUALLY OF WATERS
OF RIO GRANDE ARRIVING NEAR EL PASO, TEXAS (WHERE RIVER
BECOMES INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY), REPRESENTING ALLOTMENT

OF WATERS OF REACH OF RIVER BETWEEN EL PASO AND FORT
QUITMAN, TEXAS. WATER TREATY OF 1944 ALLOTS WATERS OF

RIO GRANDE BETWEEN FORT QUITMAN AND GULF OF MEXICO
GENERALLY AS FOLLOWS: TO MEXICO, ALL WATERS REACHING MAIN
STREAM FROM TWO LOWERMOST PRINCIPAL MEXICAN TRIBUTARIES,
TWO-THIRDS OF FLOW FROM SIX OTHER DESIGNATED PRINCIPAL
MEXICAN TRIBUTARIES, AND ONE-HALF OF FLOW IN MAIN CHANNEL
NOT OTHERWISE SPECIFICALLY ALLOTTED; AND TO THE UNITED
STATES, ALL WATERS REACHING MAIN CHANNEL FROM SEVEN
DESIGNATED PRINCIPAL US TRIBUTARIES, ONE-THIRD OF FLOW
REACHING MAIN CHANNEL FROM THE PRINCIPAL MEXICAN TRIBUTA-
RIES ABOVE THE LOWERMOST TWO, AND ONE-HALF OF FLOW IN
MAIN CHANNEL NOT OTHERWISE SPECIFICALLY ALLOTTED.

3. TWO GOVERNMENTS HAVE SINCE CONSTRUCTED UNDER 1944
TREATY TWO LARGE MULTI-PURPOSE DAMS BELOW FORT QUITMAN,
ONE NEAR DEL RIO, TEXAS, AND ANOTHER DOWNSTREAM NEAR
LAREDO, TEXAS. THESE TWO DAMS CONSERVE FOR USE IN TWO
COUNTRIES PRACTICALLY ALL WATERS REACHING THEM, AND PRO-
VIDE FLOOD CONTROL BELOW THEM FOR BOTH COUNTRIES.
CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE COSTS OF DAMS ARE SHARED
ACCORDING TO DIVISION OF CONSERVATION CAPACITY IN TWO
RESERVOIRS, THE US HAVING 56.2 PERCENT OF THE UPPER
RESERVOIR AND 58.6 PERCENT OF THE LOWER ONE.

4. OF THE WATERS OF THE COLORADO RIVER, WHICH ORIGINATE
ENTIRELY IN THE UNITED STATES, TREATY ALLOTTED TO MEXICO
AN ANNUAL QUANTITY OF 1.5 MILLION ACRE-FEET (ABOUT
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QUANTITY MEXICO WAS THEN USING), TO BE DELIVERED IN
ACCORDANCE WITH ANNUALLY ARRANGED SCHEDULES OF SUFFICIENT
FLEXIBILITY TO ENSURE FOR MEXICO DELIVERY OF WATER WHEN
IT CAN BE USED, AND FOR THE UNITED STATES CAPABILITY OF
USING WATER RETURNED TO THE RIVER FROM US PROJECTS IN
MAKING THE DELIVERIES TO MEXICO. SUPPLEMENTARY IBWC
AGREEMENT CONCLUDED IN 1973 PROVIDES THAT WATER DELIVERED
TO MEXICO IN MAIN STREAM (RELATIVELY SMALL AMOUNT IS
DELIVERED ELSEWHERE FOR CONVENIENCE OF BOTH COUNTRIES)
SHALL HAVE AN ANNUAL AVERAGE SALINITY OF NO MORE THAN
115 PPM, PLUS OR MINUS 30 PPM, OVER THE ANNUAL AVERAGE
SALINITY OF WATERS BEING DELIVERED FOR LOWEST US USERS.

5. NO ISSUES, STRICTLY SPEAKING, ARE CURRENTLY UNDER
NEGOTIATION. COMMISSION IS CONCERNED WITH TWO MAJOR
SANITATION PROBLEMS, ONE WHERE RAW SEWAGE IS DISCHARGED
BY MEXICAN COMMUNITY OF MEXICALI INTO NEW RIVER SHORTLY
BEFORE IT ENTERS US, AND OTHER WHERE TIJUANA SEWAGE IS
BEING DISCHARGED IN INCREASING QUANTITIES TO SURF WATERS

THAT ARE CARRIED BY LITTORAL CURRENT NORTHWARD TOWARD CALIFORNIA. FURTHER IBWC AGREEMENT ON SANITATION MAY

RESULT. COMMISSION IS ALSO STUDYING GROUNDWATER BASINS ON BORDER TO DETERMINE WHETHER GOVERNMENTS MIGHT AT MUTUAL ADVANTAGE CONCLUDE TREATY ON PUMPING FROM THOSE BASINS. COMMISSION HAS JUST COMPLETED MODIFICATION OF MAJOR JOINT FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT IN LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY, IS ABOUT TO COMPLETE THREE RELOCATIONS OF RIO GRANDE CHANNEL FOR PURPOSE OF PLACING SOUTH OR NORTH OF THE CHANNEL ACREAGE BEING TRANSFERRED FROM ONE COUNTRY TO OTHER IN FINAL SETTLEMENT OF ALL PENDING BOUNDARY DISPUTES (THUS MAINTAINING RIO GRANDE AS BOUNDARY), AND IS EXPECTING SHORTLY TO UNDERTAKE PROJECT ABOVE PRESIDIO, TEXAS, FOR PURPOSE OF PRESERVING INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY IN THAT REACH FROM FURTHER DETERIORATION OF CHANNEL AND HENCE UNCERTAINTY OF BOUNDARY LOCATION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENTS, WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 17-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE036631
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: T.R.MARTIN:MRG
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770057-0734
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770230/aaaabaxi.tel
Line Count: 141
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 939217c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 PARIS 4406
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3292908
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RIO GRANDE WATER DIVISIONS
TAGS: PFOR, SENV, US, MX, FR
To: PARIS
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/939217c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009